

## **COMPETITION[S]**

Let's examine the question in two parts. The first, relating to "Poetry Competitions"; the second examines competition in the life of a poet. In both cases, I suggest the only person being competed with is yourself, more specifically: your former self, your current self vs your future self.

The change is the current skill levels and levels of consciousness.

I have been admin to a number of "international poetry competitions (How could they be anything else when you're speaking to the world?) I did so, because I could (potentially make a success of, or failure.). I succeeded and over the years have run a number of competitions. All on a shoe-string budget. I was already getting poems published regularly in FEMALE FIRST, so I approached them to join with us; they accepted; so we have a truly international publisher behind us. I then set out to form a worldwide panel of judges. I asked poets from around the world; they accepted.

Then the criteria for selection became an issue. I wanted each judge's final vote to be in the form of a number. I created L.U.I.S.E.

Lyricism and visuality  
Use of language and imagery  
Innovation and imagination  
Style and setting  
Emotional impact and connectivity with the reader

The judges were requested to rate the poem 1 - 5 (one being the lowest) on each of those criteria. The total was then added to the overall tally. The winner was the poem with the highest score.

Is poetry a competitive environment? Given the diversity of style and subject, treatment and technicality, I say no. It is an individual talking with themselves, expressing thoughts and feelings on paper.